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ABSTRACT

School security directors, educators, and social scientists met in conference to explore in depth the causes of school crime and to recommend realistic means of containing and minimizing it. The conferees made the following recommendations. All school administrators should set up an appropriate recordkeeping system in order to pinpoint patterns of school crime in an effort to anticipate problems. Oversized schools that foster an impersonal atmosphere must be reorganized to create smaller units that give rise to a feeling of community among the students. Increased involvement of students and citizens in all aspects of school life is imperative if the schools are to comprise a safe and humane environment for all. School systems must offer appropriate program alternatives and options that will provide substance and meaning to the broad range of student abilities to be served. If the rate of crime reaches a point at which it is necessary to employ security personnel, the school system should employ a professional staff with a law enforcement background rather than use guards and uniformed police in the halls. Substantial resources should be allocated for the development of curricula that emphasize the teaching of moral and ethical values. Photographs may reproduce poorly. (Author/MLF)

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# the problem of school security

an |I|D|E|A| occasional paper

The report of a national seminar sponsored by the Institute for Development of Educational Activities, Inc., *the educational affiliate of the Charles F. Kettering Foundation.*

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# introduction

Crime in schools, almost unheard of a decade ago, has become a national problem. Schoolyards full of adolescents have always been the scene of random fighting but within the past few years, adolescence has become an age of high incidence of criminal activity.

Bigness which has resulted in oversized schools coupled with changed social attitudes have emasculated the traditional methods of school discipline. Teachers in many schools have become reluctant to reprimand students out of fear of physical harm. The consequence is that regularly assigned policemen or security people are now common in both urban and suburban schools. In city schools, the newly created job of assistant superintendent for security is becoming as visible as the assistant superintendent of instruction.

Violence against teachers and students in schools is increasing at an alarming rate. Assaults on students and teachers by other students as well as outsiders have made teaching and attending school in the inner city a hazardous undertaking. The deteriorating level of discipline has been well documented by the media. The problem is current, important, and worsening. It is nationwide and exists to an increasing degree in suburban as well as urban schools.

The President's Commission on School Finance, after the completion of an exhaustive study of schooling, expressed the problem succinctly:

> *"School children need to be able to walk from their home or bus to the school building in safety and need to be free from physical violence and extortion while attending schools. Until the atmosphere of terror is removed . . . little progress can be made in restructuring and maintaining an environment conducive to learning."*[1]

While everyone agrees on the need for a safe school environment, the question of how to achieve one has given rise to a diversity of approaches. An analysis of the many suggestions on how to make the schools safe discloses a fundamental split even among the so-called "experts" in school security matters. One group is tactically oriented and emphasizes security training for the teaching staff, increased use of hardware such as locks, bars on windows, fences, alarms, security personnel, and the collection of school crime data for analysis. Another group views the problem as symptomatic of social ills. It advocates curing the social ills as the way to de-escalate the schools' problems.

School security directors, educators, and social scientists met in conference at the invitation of the Institute for Development of Educational Activities

[1] The President's Commission on School Finance, *Schools, People, and Money: The Need for Educational Reform* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1972), p. 46.

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to explore in depth the causes of school crime and recommend realistic means of containing and minimizing it.

## the magnitude of school crime

Evidence of the magnitude and depth of the problem which has made the security of students, teachers, and school buildings critical is reflected in the following study and statistics: The National Education Association's Center for Human Relations conducted a random survey comparing current problems with those of 1970. The comparison revealed that in-school assault and battery had increased by 58 percent, school robberies by 117 percent, sex offenses by 62 percent, and drug problems by 81 percent.[2]

A few examples reported at the seminar of the severity of rapidly increasing school crime were: In Oakland, California, a mother waiting for her two daughters at a junior high school was shot and killed by two teen-aged boys. A 15-year-old student in Pittsburgh was critically stabbed in the chest after a football game. A Chicago elementary school principal was shot and killed by a student who was angry at being expelled and transferred and who had already wounded the assistant principal and a security guard. A kindergarten teacher in Los Angeles was robbed in front of her students by an armed youth who took her money, engagement ring, and wedding band. In Houston, three teachers were raped on school grounds in one semester. A month-long confrontation between rival gangs involving guns chains, bricks, steel combs, concrete blocks, and sticks at one Los Angeles high school resulted in deaths, woundings, beatings, and wanton destruction. Several guns were confiscated. Following the episode, administrators commented that school officials were forced to use methods almost akin to Gestapo tactics in dealing with the situation.[3] These are but a few examples of the increase in criminal incidents in and around schools.

## vandalism

While there has long been a concern for the security of school buildings, the safety of these facilities has become a significant factor in the rise of school crime. The June 1973 issue of SCHOOL PRODUCT NEWS reported a survey on vandalism in school systems by enrollment: School districts of from 5 to 10 thousand showed an annual average vandalism cost of over $12 thousand; those with between 10 and 20 thousand students reported a cost of over $21 thousand; and those with over 25,000 students, an average of $250 thousand. When these damages are distributed among the almost 17,000

[2]Oral report made by George Jones at the seminar

[3]Oral report made by Joseph I. Grealy at the seminar

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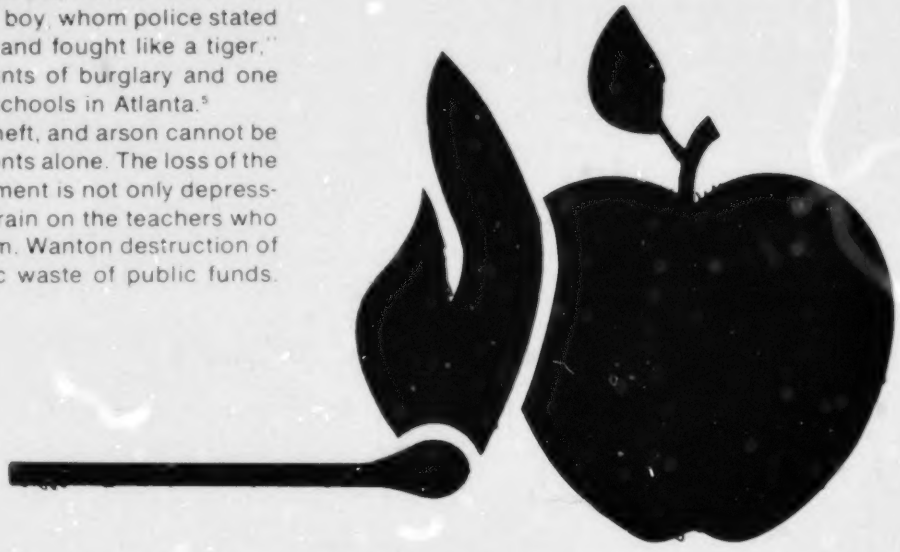
school districts, one can appreciate how really conservative is the estimate of a half billion dollars in vandalism damage per year nationally. Types of vandalism vary as greatly as the kinds of school crimes: After 100 Seattle parents voluntarily painted a school, it was broken into and unused paint smeared throughout the building. After breaking into a high school in San Pedro, California, four boys turned on a fire hose and flooded the classrooms. They subsequently dumped books in the school library and destroyed a number of band instruments. At a suburban high school in California, vandals broke as many things as they could lay their hands on. They knocked typewriters off desks, sprayed fire extinguishers, and scattered papers and materials throughout the building.[4]

Destruction by fire is by far the most expensive form of vandalism. Arsonists virtually destroyed an elementary school in Pensacola, Florida in a Christmas Eve fire. A 13-year-old boy, whom police stated "screamed like a panther and fought like a tiger," was charged with six counts of burglary and one count of arson involving schools in Atlanta.[5]

The cost of vandalism, theft, and arson cannot be measured in dollars and cents alone. The loss of the use of facilities and equipment is not only depressing, but places a severe strain on the teachers who must function without them. Wanton destruction of public property is a tragic waste of public funds. Unfortunately, in most states, the penalty for vandalism is not severe and little or no effort is made to collect for the damages from either the vandal or his parents.

## overreactions

While the aforementioned incidents reveal the extent of the problem, they have also created an additional problem—hysteria and overreaction. For example, a bill was recently introduced in the New York State Legislature to assign a school guard to every school lavatory in New York City. With about 1,000 school buildings averaging five lavatories each, the required personnel would number 5,000. Cost notwithstanding, there are presently approximately 1,800 school security personnel in the New York City school system.



[4] Ibid.
[5] Ibid.

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## who commits school crime?

A report submitted to the seminar indicates that all of the acts of crime in and against schools are committed by about five percent of the adolescents who are either still in school or have had some recent connection with the school. Roughly four percent of the crime is attributed to recent dropouts or pushouts who invade the school grounds during the day or night. Only one percent of the school crimes are perpetrated by youngsters who are currently enrolled in schools.

## are schools the ignition point of social injustice?

The assemblage of hundreds of adolescents, subjected to the arbitrary control of a few dozen adults and legally restricted in an institutional setting, in itself creates conditions for potential physical violence. Even if no other reasons exist for change in the way schools have traditionally operated, these factors are enough to motivate schools toward a search for alternatives with more humane environments.

One of the studies examined at the seminar was a survey conducted for the New York Board of Education by the Academy for Educational Development, Inc. In an effort to pinpoint causes of school crime, the survey questioned over 300 school administrators, faculty, students, and security personnel in four large, troubled New York City high schools. Their findings are revealing. The major problem areas with respect to school safety mentioned by these groups of respondents were:

- the large number of exits and entrances in the building and the impossibility of keeping out intruders
- class cutters
- low reading scores and the consequent frustration with or apathy toward learning among turned-off students
- teacher insensitivity to students, particularly minority students or those not highly motivated
- laxness of discipline on the parts of courts, teachers, and administrators
- insufficient counseling personnel
- too few guards.[6]

"It is interesting to note that no student groups mentioned low reading scores as a factor in school

[6]Report by the Panel on School Safety, *A Safer Environment for Learning*, (New York: Academy for Educational Development, Inc., October 31, 1972), pp. 15-16.

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safety and no administration group referred to laxness of discipline," the report stated. "All student groups alluded to teacher insensitivity."[7]

A significant part of the school crime problem comes about as the result of a breakdown of the social mechanisms that once existed to keep crime under control. Wilson Riles, California superintendent of public instruction, who has been deeply concerned with the issue, puts it aptly: "Conflict in the schools is a reflection of the conflicts which run through the whole nation and society, but that fact does not excuse the schools and school leaders from their responsibilities."[8] Student behavior will be shaped by a variety of community interests and ties. The degree of such behavioral influencing will depend on local conditions.

Whatever the situation within a school, it is a reflection of conditions in the larger community beyond the school grounds. "I think crime in school mirrors the effects of the crime in the community at large," a principal charged. "The student body is a more emotional microcosm of the neighborhood. Psychologists and sociologists contend that frustrations born in drug problems, muggings, poor housing, and unemployment yield youngsters who are quite likely to explode over little or nothing at school."

The conferees concluded that many factors contribute to the rise of violence in the schools:

**1**

The anti-dropout campaigns have succeeded. Few jobs are available for unskilled youth so the school is as good a place as any to pass the time of day—even if the youngster is 19 or 20 years of age.

**2**

Schools are no longer special privilege institutions. Where schools were once considered a refuge or neutral ground from community problems, they are now the ignition point of neighborhood frustrations and a target for those criminally prone.

**3**

Gangs fighting for control of a neighborhood are bringing their conflicts to schools. Shoot-outs in schools between gang members emphasize this problem. These problems often surround the control of the local drug traffic or a theft-and-extortion ring.

*"Schools are becoming a more hostile environment where young people just do not feel comfortable." STEPHEN ROLLIN*

A psychologist at the seminar was of the opinion that school crime was symptomatic of the systemic problem of youngsters remaining in school instead of dropping out but failing to attend regularly, resulting in greatly increased truancy. "Schools are becoming a more hostile environment where young

[7] Ibid., p. 16.

[8] *A Report on Conflict & Violence in California's High Schools*, (Sacramento, California State Department of Education, 1973), p. iii.

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people just do not feel comfortable. We have examples in a city like Jacksonville, which has a fairly high crime rate in Florida, where schools in the same community have different crime and truancy rates, but yet the school and community environments are almost identical. The difference seems to be the relationship within the school."

Perhaps the biggest problem confronting the schools but the one that gets the least attention is the matter of truancy. Crime is dramatic and people like to talk about it, but truancy is unsensational and does not make the news. Truancy becomes a part of the problem because it contributes to idleness which in turn is one of the causes of adolescent crime outside of the schools.

Although the growing problem of truancy has received little or no attention, it is now extremely serious. In many urban communities, the average daily attendance is down to an astounding 72 percent and in some inner city schools, it is less than 50 percent and falling. Furthermore, the problem is nationwide. Florida, which can by no means be considered an industrial state, reports a drop in average daily attendance for each of the last five years.

Related to the truancy issue is the problem of suspensions from school. Here again, one is presented with an absence of national statistics, but local data gives some insight into the extent of this problem. A study of 10 school districts in one state revealed that, during a particular school year, 2,500 students were suspended for 17,000 school days.

Why are many school environments so hostile that students want to leave or become so recalcitrant that they must be suspended from them? This is an unanswered question which must be resolved if the school security problems are to be contained.

## schools reflect their communities

The decade of the 60's witnessed high schools that grew to sizes of unreasonable proportions without adequate perception of the attendent social problems. Society seems reluctant to realize that a random selection of youngsters will reflect much the same strengths and weaknesses of an equal number of randomly chosen adults. The consequence is police in the halls of large schools which are located in the midst of communities with a high incidence of crime. Yet many people are shocked at the prospect of police patrolling school halls.

The problem must be viewed in perspective. Franklin K. Lane High School in Brooklyn, for example, enrolls over 5,300 students. Focus this against the number of policemen employed in a town of 5,300 people. Then the school's assigned law enforcement officers can be seen in a better perspective. A survey of Atlanta, Georgia projected that every

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1,000 new inhabitants in that city included 11 juvenile delinquents, 16 alcoholics, and 30 mentally retarded children. This same group of new inhabitants required the city to hire two more firemen, three more policemen, 10 more teachers, and to build seven more school classrooms.[9] The schools' racial m eu must be viewed as reflecting the communities they serve.

## is security a school or police function?

The major police issue about school security confronting the schools is a tripartite question. Should school authorities let local police handle school security problems, supplement local law enforcement agencies with school security personnel, or establish a separate school security force? A vacillating attitude over incidents of crime in schools and the lack of a definite policy on who does what has left a wake of injured students, faculty, and damaged school property, but little resolution of the problem. This lack of positive action by school authorities has resulted in legitimate demands from citizens and teacher organizations for the presence of uniformed police in the schools.

Attempting to cope with school crime, many boards of education have begun to employ people to perform police functions within the schools. As early as 1969, *Education Daily* reported, "Police patrols are now common in the corridors of our urban schools. Security guards are stationed in every junior and senior high school in New York City. The Newark schools now maintain a security force larger than the police force of many New Jersey communities."[10]

A militaristic, "big brother" security program with guards in the halls is as detrimental to a learning institution as the crime such tactics purport to eliminate. Rather than enact long-term programs aimed at preventing school crime, administrators have either reacted inadequately or ignored school crime, hoping it would go away. Failure to develop plans and response options in advance of the incidents leaves the principal little choice but to call in local police.

[9] "Impact of 1000 New Inhabitants" n.d.

[10] "The Character of High School Protests," *Education Daily*, Vol. 2, No. 111, June 11, 1969), p. 5.

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"Educators believe that the police can prevent school violence," Major Tyree S. Broomfield, Director of conflict management for the Dayton, Ohio police department, emphasized to a group in Washington in early 1973. "They cannot. They react to violence. Once in a school, we assume the kids are wrong and proceed on that premise. Once in, it is very hard to get us out." Sociological observers argue that a strict law enforcement strategy only alienates students from decision making, priority settings, and a sense of participation in their educational environment.

School principals must learn how to work with the police, how to deploy them and, most important, how to disengage them from the school. A sociologist at the seminar noted that, "Most principals simply do not understand there are, in fact, command procedures for calling, using, deploying, and disengaging the police from a school situation."

The use of uniformed policemen in the schools should be limited to special or emergency situations and police should be restricted to carefully defined roles worked out in advance with local law enforcement officials. In fact, *all aspects of a school's reaction to disruption should be planned in advance*, and everyone on the staff should know what is expected of him in a disruptive situation. As little as possible should be left to improvisation or to chance.

If the school system does set up a security network, it must address itself to such questions as: Who constitutes the security staff and what are their roles? Does the security force resemble a law enforcement organization or is it organized around a guidance approach? Do they assume a position of aiding only in times of crisis as does the National Guard and only switch to a tactical, law enforcement role in cases of obvious law violations or serious incidents?

## dealing with school crime

As a rule, the school district most in need of a security program is usually the one with the least funds available for financing one. The Safe Schools Act, which had been introduced in both houses of Congress at the time of the seminar, was designed to meet this and other school security problems. The Act proposes to earmark federal funds for the purposes of learning more about the school crime problem, developing and testing techniques for dealing with school crime, and providing funds to assist the most vulnerable school districts in formulating and implementing organized programs to achieve a secure habitat for students and staffs.

*If such management practices as preplanning, proper pre- and in-service training, organizational*

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*A survey conducted in New York City schools revealed that when you had an acting or temporary principal, you had security problems.* ELDRIDGE WAITH

*structure, professional supervision, long-term support, and student as well as local citizen involvement are not carried out, then school security will be a travesty, amplifying instead of nullifying the problems of school crime, whether it is federally financed or locally inspired."*

Few shool districts have established guidelines for principals to follow in handling investigations of student crime. Rather than prosecuting a student for a criminal act, a principal usually suspends him not realizing that, in so doing, he may be breaking a law. Failure to report a serious crime is in itself an offense. School authorities who work with law enforcement officials must recognize they are bound by certain legal requirements of investigation. Neglecting to follow legal requirements can result in evidence being declared inadmissible as well as civil action being taken against the administrator and the school system.

Since school administrators generally have neither the skills nor interest to perform school security work in serious problem situations, many school systems now employ a security specialist at the district level to work with the local school staff in coordinating security measures. The security specialist is equipped to analyze the problem, prescribe countermeasures, and control the situation tactically to minimize alarm to the student and citizen populous.

When a crime has been committed, school officials' obligations to the community and society transcend their obligations to the individual student. Assault with a deadly weapon, felonious assault, patterns of systematic intimidation that give students a rational fear of coming to school—such conduct must be dealt with forcefully in the criminal justice system.

## a perspective on security personnel

Any superintendent who thinks he can hire a security specialist, give him a healthy budget, and expect the problems to subside is deluding himself. Security officers, alone, cannot solve many of the elements of conflict or violence in the school because these are usually bred in a dispute with another student or a faculty member. *"Our research has shown that a very significant teacher problem is involved in disruptive student behavior,"* a security director noted. *"We found around five to eight teachers responsible for the bulk of school suspensions. A pattern even becomes evident in terms of which teachers get beaten up and which ones do not."* It is true that what happens in the interchange between the teacher and the students bears heavily on the security person's job. Some teachers never have a disruption in their classes, while others have a demonstrated pattern of disruption.

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Another conferee confirmed that the key to many of the problems is the teacher. "About 80 percent of the complaints we receive are from teachers. Upon looking into them, we find that a great many problems are teacher initiated. *The key to a number of problems that we have in our schools today is to be very careful with the people we turn loose in the classroom.*"

Security personnel are advocating new procedures for students such as grievance procedures which can be instituted against any school staff member. Grievance procedures were unthinkable in most school systems a decade ago. The concept of allowing a student, through due process, to confront a teacher is now accepted in most school districts.

A principal admitted that instituting a student grievance process had surfaced many of the abrasive things that happened to students. "When the student can appeal, it has been my finding that he is not interested as much in the outcome of the appeal as he is in the right to confront that person." This principal credited the appeal system for reducing faculty-student conflicts by over 50 percent. Unquestionably, a grievance procedure to which students have easy access is an effective device in reducing hostility.

*"If you were to ask principals and teachers 'What do you really think about security?' you would get a custodial rather than a law enforcement response." S. D. VESTERMARK, JR.*

The security responsibility is pervasive, involving every member of the staff, faculty, and student body as well as parents. "One of the things that has been happening to us in the schools," a discussant remarked, "is a move away from a collegial solidarity in which people take responsibility for each other and into an ethnic solidarity in which they stand together against the rest of the world." There is also a professional solidarity evident in education.

"If you were to ask principals and teachers 'What do you really think about security?' you would get a custodial rather than a law enforcement response. If school security people could be viewed simply as law enforcement types, with that degree of professionalism implicit, you might be making some progress. But in many systems, security men are viewed as nothing more than glorified janitors. That shapes not only perceptions, but also provisions for hiring, and governing school security operations, plus a whole range of problems."

## security personnel . . . guards or counselors?

Considering the movement of schools toward actively trying to make students responsible for what goes on in them and looking at the developing school security profession, a conferee contended that the school security professional may, in today's climate of increased responsibility and involvement, meet some student needs much more effectively

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than many other professionals in the school system. "If an adolescent is having trouble, if he is having involvement with the law, or if he is having a problem of intimidation in the school setting, the investigator-counselor or the service officer, not a guard, can help him. This individual can provide a lot more help than can the guidance counselor."

One of the problems in trying to develop a school security profession is finding a vehicle by which to insert a new emerging professional role into a system which views it as little more than janitorial and custodial, ignores it, condescends to it, and actively opposes it. Many vested interests within the school correctly see that a mature investigator-counselor or service officer, now used in some systems, can meet the students' needs in a more concrete and urgent way than many of the educational professionals can. The schools are one more arena in which early citizenship gets acted out for better or for worse. The question becomes: If a youngster is put in a situation where he cannot exercise responsibility and cannot behave in an effective way because of intimidation, fear, and threat, who helps him? Is it going to be a guidance counselor who timidly sashays around the problem or is it going to be somebody who knows about law enforcement, about counseling, and how to help young people? This is where one begins to approach some of the real problems in defining not just student responsibility, but the school's security personnel. The nature of school security work dictates the need for individuals who enjoy and are able to work with youngsters in stress as well as straight situations. Their role can be cruel or crucial. Discomfiture in the school situation is what makes a youngster commit disruptive acts in the school.

## programs and perceptions

"We have proven that when schools offer something meaningful in a tight schedule to a student, he will come to a school setting, do what he has to do, and leave without bothering anybody else. Unfortunately, we have put into the school system a lot of frills and frivolous things which some youngsters do not see as having any relationship to their being in school."

Another discussant agreed, noting that the purpose of schooling has become twisted. "One of the main reasons we have schools is to provide access to the American dream. It is to afford an opportunity for us to get out, get jobs, make money, and earn a living to maintain our society. What happens, though, is that education is operating in a mass-produced kind of way. The facts are that we end up teaching toward the mean. We say, 'Well, what's

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good for the average youngster in that class has to be good for everybody else. We don't have the time to talk about individual differences.' Every school of education I have ever visited has the motto emblazoned somewhere—'individual differences, and so on'—but, in fact, when it comes down to the practice, it doesn't happen. What we need to do is to look at how we can reach individual students in a manner that is effective. We need to be out looking at learning styles. Not everybody learns most efficiently through reading nor does everybody learn most effectively through abstraction.

"We know that most people who graduate from universities are very strong on intuition," this conferee continued. "We also know that adolescents who get in trouble are not strong on intuition—in fact, they are seasoned doers. They are people who really need very solid kinds of concepts."

The chairman observed that whereas school was a ladder to the promised personal success three or four decades ago, today it is perceived as a collection of barriers one must traverse with no real goal at the end. Unemployment greets a number of successful graduates. A principal concurred, noting: "The hierarchal arrangement in the schools was tolerated by youngsters when they felt that the schools could bequeath. The schools can no longer deliver and the youngsters are no longer willing to tolerate them."

These observations are substantiated by an analysis conducted by Nathan Caplan of the Institute for Social Research at the University of Michigan. The major distinction between delinquents and nondelinquents, according to Caplan, was a belief by the delinquents that their chances of finishing high school were poor and that the jobs they could get following high school would be of low status. It was this pessimism and no family or social life which was predictive of delinquent behavior." A state-appointed task force on disruptive youth in Florida reached a similar conclusion. It stated, in part, "In terms of the predictability of potential dropouts, the academic

*"One of the things that has been happening to us in the schools is a move away from a collegial solidarity in which people take responsibility for each other and into an ethnic solidarity in which they stand together against the rest of the world." MARTIN MAYER*

"Pessimism about School Precedes Delinquency," *Education Daily*, Vol. 7, No. 81, (April 25, 1974), p. 6

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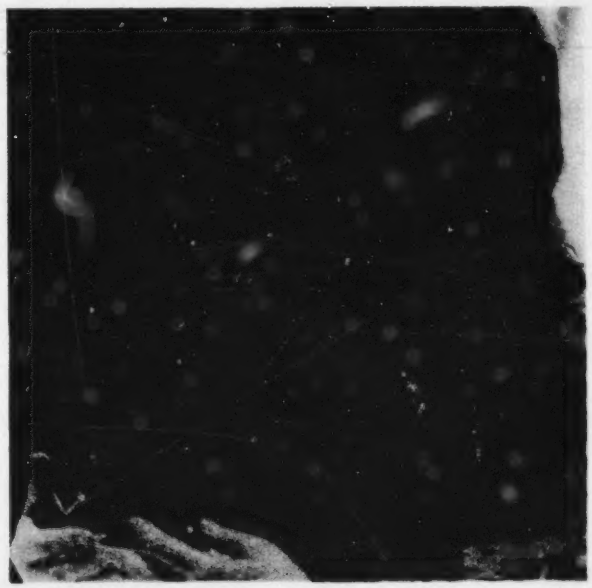
variables seemed to be the most powerful predictors of potential disruptive youth and were more useful than socioeconomic criteria."[12] If the light at the end of the tunnel is dim or nonexistent, why try to get there?

*All of these diverse elements and observations point to the twin avenues of strong educational leadership and heavy student, parent, and community involvement.* The two parts are not mutually exclusive. Students are being moved at a much earlier age toward an acceptance of a citizenship role. The schools should be responding to this societal move and both broadening and deepening the training which they give in citizenship.

## maybe the fault lies with the program, not people?

Phillip Viso, principal of the Industrial Skill Center in Chicago, places the blame for the high incidence of school crime on the school's curriculum. He contends that the central problem is a lack of substance and meaning in the classrooms which makes wandering in the hall or shooting craps in the lavatory an attractive option for students. "School attendance should come from a personal desire, so it is a matter of program design. The law will never compel compulsory thinking only 'body in place.' "[13]

One participant of the seminar reported on a highly effective program in which concerned instructors turn troublemakers into real students. "We have 15 schools set up for the dropout, the pushout, or the student on suspension. Before some youngsters are sent to prison, the judge hands them over to us. We are located in one of the most disadvantaged areas in one of the most depressive buildings in New York City. Our students have committed some of the worst things you can possibly think of, and I am proud to say we do not have one single security guard. Our approach is the program. These 16- to 19-year-old students have committed criminal acts because of the frustrations attendant with going to school."



*"The best security comes from reliable educational programs."*
*CORRINE WILLING*

[12] *The Governor's Task Force on Disruptive Youth*, (Tallahassee: State of Florida, September 14, 1973), p. 12.

[13] Remarks made by Phillip Viso at the School Safety Conference sponsored by the U.S. Office of Education in Washington, D.C. on January 29-30, 1973.

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# how should school security be handled?

School security is a program in search of a system. Nationally, it lacks definition, standards, a statistical data base, specified role, and credibility. Neighboring school districts reflect a diversity of approaches. One may employ a crew of semi-retirees to serve as night watchmen while another district may have a professional team of crack specialists trained in crisis management and juvenile counseling.

There seems little need to question the necessity for a school security specialist for some school districts. When a specialist becomes necessary, the position should be established at the highest level of the superintendent's staff. If a department becomes necessary, it should be professionally staffed by experienced people who want to work with children and adolescents. "School security cannot be buried within the hierarchy of the school administration," a security director warned. "The school district's security director should have immediate access to the superintendent of schools. If the superintendent believes in and endorses the security program, then the principals are going to believe in it. Selection of the security staff is equally as important as teacher selection. We went through 300 applications before selecting 21 people for our effort. These men and women have come from law enforcement backgrounds. They are people who have a tremendous commitment to youth and their problems. They know that the old law enforcement approach does not always work."

School is a person's first major institutional and community experience outside the family. His wants are stacked against the desires of his peers. The student's perceptions of society are structured, in large measure, by what he experiences in the classroom and how he is treated in the halls. These perceptions have definite implications for a security program. Is rhetoric in the classroom about democracy overshadowed by militaristic regimentation in halls filled with fear and outrage? To not ask, and answer, such questions is to neglect an important aspect of the school security program. However, the right of balance of security is a give-and-take proposition.

The unwitting programs and conditions in many schools contribute to these institutions' security problems. *The violent reactions of some students to the schools are caused by overcrowding, frustration in not being able to cope with the sometimes irrelevant curriculum, dehumanization, lack of reading and math skills, and an unwillingness to conform to apparently meaningless rules and regulations having little or no relationship to the outcome of education.*

# the teachers

Maintaining order on school property traditionally has been part of a teacher's normal duties. What is the legitimate responsibility of teachers in a disruptive situation? Do teachers and other staff members have a role to fill? Recent collective-bargaining contracts with teacher groups evidence the teacher's desire to remove himself from contact with students except in the classroom. What are the implications of such a trend? Teachers, particularly in a disruptive school, feel isolated in their classrooms.

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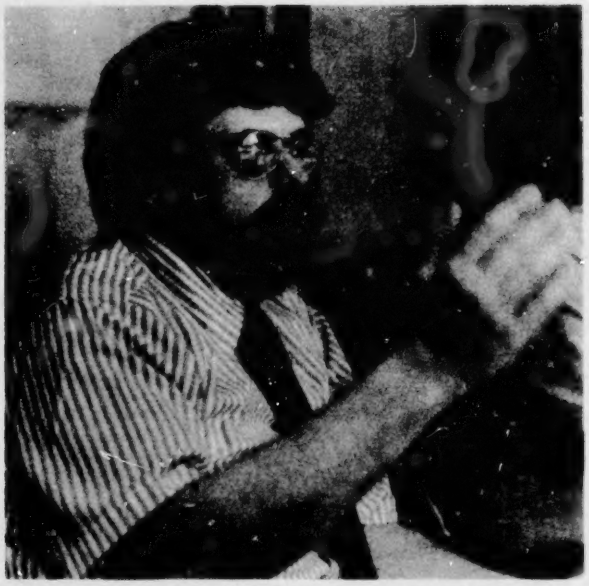

"The key to a number of problems that we have in our schools today is to be very careful with the people we turn loose in the classroom." PETER BLAUVELT

*An increasing number of teachers admit fear of their students. A noted response to these attitudinal changes is increased hiring of male teachers at the secondary level. This in itself has a detrimental effect on teaching and learning, as the market for teachers has traditionally contained a higher number of quality women teachers than men.*

Many observers argue that teachers have purposely used the cloak of professionalism and the muscle of collective bargaining to evade what should be their responsibilities for discipline throughout the school.

Teachers are the best resource for controlling student behavior—provided they are willing to work with students and not limit their function to the instructional process.

Obviously, teachers cannot escape involvement in this problem. Classrooms cannot be sanctuaries in a school where the halls and lavatories are dangerous. Students who are concerned about their personal safety after the bell rings for class dismissal are not likely to concentrate on their work in class.

The ideal role of school security is to provide an environment of stability and safety. Such an environment can be established through procedures that reinforce the formal educational values governing the school and enlist students in the common task of preserving a community atmosphere that supports many different kinds of legitimate learning activities.

A security director declared that involving the students and citizens in the school's operation, including the security program, was the only way to achieve a sense of school community. "If I am a victim of a crime, I probably have in the back of my mind how to deal with that crime. We formed a student security advisory council in our school system. We said to the secondary students, 'look, you have a vested interest in this building.' We do not exclude anybody from joining. Whoever wants to get involved can. I will even bring in a youngster who may be part of the problem, because the only way we are going to come up with solutions is to involve everybody without restriction."

An effective security program has to have the commitment and, therefore, the involvement of the students, not only in recognition of the problem,

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but also in planning and carrying out corrective measures. "Where young people as part of their schooling participate in other human services with responsibility for someone else, security problems are not as great," a discussant experienced in student involvement programs declared. "The youngsters are responsible and held accountable. That does something to them that permeates the entire school.

The biggest block to youth involvement programs is the old-world concept of teacher (meaning a position of lecturer rather than participator). When we give training programs as we do, we have to work on attitude change among the school personnel to recognize that young people need to be treated as adults. They are really adults, except that we haven t given them the responsibility that they should exercise. They never learn it because we just drop them before they have had time to practice it which is what youth involvement and participation is all about. I see student involvement as the big preventive measure in a school security program, because the students make it their responsibility."

## the students

In order to set up a successful security program utilizing students, the school administration must start with students at a point where they can accept the fact that they have a vested interest. A discussant elaborated, "Sometimes students cannot identify with washrooms as being their problem, but when it is their locker or their car that is being broken into, it becomes a very real thing to them. Start at that point."

The biggest single security problem at a high school in the Northeast was the theft of tape decks, batteries, tires, and even cars from the school parking lot. The system's security director held an assembly for everyone who drove to school. Three hundred students showed up and after the assembly, 293 volunteered six at a time to patrol the parking lots. "When I say patrol," the director commented, "what we ask them to be are observers and reporters of incidents. We do not want them to take any overt action. When they see a car come on to the campus that does not belong there, the observers call the security officer or investigator-counselor and let them know about it. We have cut larcenies from automobiles from about 35 a month to almost nothing at that senior high school. The students were involved. They did it, not my security people. The more that I involve the students in the program, the greater opportunity we are going to have for success."

The formation of the student security advisory council is based on the idea that a student not only has the right to enjoy a feeling of security while is school, but also has the responsibility to help

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maintain that security. Selecting a true cross-section of the school's student body to serve on the council is important. Volunteers should be openly encouraged. Approximately 15 to 20 students should serve on the council. No student should be appointed to the council by the school administration as such action undermines the effectiveness of the program. Properly supported and encouraged, the council can deal with specific problems such as the prevention of thefts and fights or general items such as improving race relations and bettering the atmosphere within the school. The council serves as the means of bringing students together to work on solutions to the school's total security problems. The student security advisory council is not a police agency and does not have enforcement powers.

An essential ingredient to establishing a security program with student and citizen involvement is a free flow of information. Discussion groups are suggested as a way to break down typical pseudo-barriers between students, faculty, administration, and, possibly, law enforcement officials and parents. These sessions help to create an atmosphere which opens up needed information channels to stem security problems. The use of discussion sessions may take several months before the old prejudices die and the proper atmosphere is achieved.

If school youth patrols are viable as demonstrated by the "white hat" youth patrols organized in the civil riots of the late 60's, guidelines for their development and sustenance must be established. These patrols are relatively easy to form and operate during a crisis, but their existence in the long run presents a challenge. The use of such patrols made up of students may be useful in fending off large disruptions but will likely be of less assistance in stopping individual assaults.

The sentimental attitude that adults harbor toward young people in school is probably the single biggest barrier to these feasible student involvement efforts. Educators talk and write about the changes in student rights, responsibilities, and obligations; the lower voting and drinking age; or the earlier maturation. But the barrier-oriented school systems persist in sustaining a fantasy of the adolescent as an essentially naive individual who will move through this established tract to enjoy, at a later point, the rights conferred by adults.

Another hurdle to involving citizens and/or youth in school security matters stems from a basic attitude among educational and establishment leaders that students and private citizens have no moral, legal, or professional role in such matters. An ego problem arises in the principal's tacit admission of inability to cope with security in his school. Other objections to student and citizen participation come from law enforcement officials, parents, community leaders, and even students.

Is the school the last chance for some youngsters before a life of crime? Can security officers also

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serve as counselors and attempt to alter student behavior? An affirmative answer to these questions will raise more questions of overlapping responsibilities with welfare and mental health agencies. Jealousy between bureaucracies can destroy a promising program. However, important human considerations dictate involvement in these gray areas. *The school that maintains a safe, secure environment may become the only stable element in a youngster's otherwise tormented life. It could be the turnkey to his becoming a contributing citizen rather than a ward of the state.*

## training for citizenship

What should the schools be doing program-wise about the high incidence of crime among adolescents? A major emphasis is needed on educating students for increased citizenship responsibility.

The traditional school approach to teaching citizenship is embarrassingly ineffective. For most students, a course in civics is terminal education in American government. To make the matter worse, this course is too often taught by the school's most ineffective teacher as administrators attach little importance to civics courses.

The conventional civics approach to teaching citizenship with its itinerant visit to the local courthouse has not been effective. The effort to teach young people about responsibility and citizenship requires that they be sent out in the community to acquire experience in our system of civil and criminal justice at work. As part of their training in citizenship, junior and senior high school students should spend part of each day working and observing in the courts, judges' chambers, probation offices, police headquarters, and law offices.

The strategy for bringing about this reform should be interdisciplinary, but each discipline should have specific objectives. From a curricular standpoint, the areas of social studies, English, and literature are more relevant to moral and ethical education than subjects such as mathematics or physical science. Consequently, the major focus should be in these areas. This new effort by the high schools should involve broad-based community participation.

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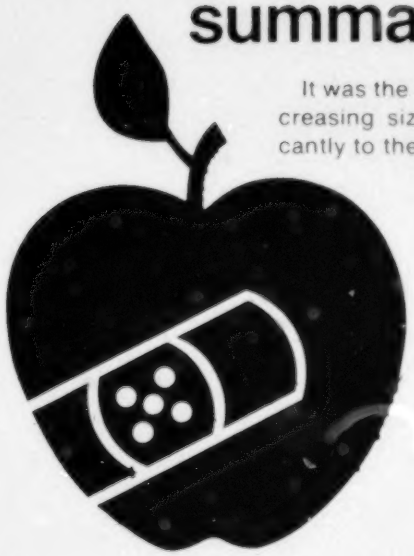
*In brief, the unrepruachable foundation of school skills has been reading, writing, and arithmetic. To this list of core subjects must be added a new and vigorous emphasis on education for citizenship. The objective of education for citizenship should be the student acquiring a balance between individual rights and social responsibility. This program should not go through the process of a leisurely evolution, rather the school should move swiftly toward this objective.*

## summary



It was the consensus of the conferees that the increasing size of high schools contributes significantly to the spread of school crime. They strongly

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advocated that oversized high schools reorganize themselves into smaller units. "Big schools are out of date," an educator summarized. Savings in costs are outweighed by the human damage in student alienation. In an overcrowded atmosphere, students develop the attitude that they have no control over their destiny or situation. This in turn leads to apathy or, even worse, hostility. The student body becomes fractionated.

The conferees formulated the following proposition: The lower the sense of community that is felt within the school the more likely a security problem will exist. Conversely, a sense of community establishes a relatively secure atmosphere. In present large school plants, a psychological reduction can be accomplished through adoption of the "house" style organization which gives teachers and students a manageably smaller human group to which they can direct their collegial loyalties.

One successful approach to tackling the problem of oversized schools is the use of alternatives. Alternative programs using the entire community as the school campus, coupled with a vast expansion of work-study opportunities, are options which guarantee better dispersal of students. Quite apart from their educational value, action-learning programs pursued in the community diminish the severity of the school crime problem. Again, the key is community involvement which must include the use of all community resources as the student's educational campus.

By expecting a designated authority to assume all responsibility for ensuring their safety in the school, students are deceiving themselves. *If a security effort is to be effective, it requires a certain level of active cooperation from those receiving the protection. Students must exhibit more concern for the acts of their peers.*

The potential for violence or the avoidance of it lies in the student body. If denied a voice within the educational setting, students are more likely to contribute to school crime by their apathy.

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1

All school administrators should set up an appropriate record-keeping system in order to pinpoint patterns of school crime in an effort to anticipate potential problems.

2

Oversized schools which foster an impersonal atmosphere must be reorganized to create smaller units that give rise to a feeling of community among students rather than personal alienation.

3

Increased involvement of students and citizens in all aspects of school life is imperative if the schools are to comprise a safe and humane environment for all.

4

School systems must offer appropriate alternatives and options in school programs which will provide substance and meaning to the broad range of student abilities to be served.

5

If the rate of crime reaches a point where it is necessary to employ security personnel, the school system should employ a professional staff with a law enforcement background rather than use guards and uniformed police in the halls.

6

Substantial resources should be allocated for the development of curricula with an emphasis on the teaching of moral and ethical values. Developing this program would require the active participation of educators, legal scholars, and a broad mix of citizens in the community.

## recommendations

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